

## Virginia Latino Advisory Board Meeting

Friday – April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019 9:10 a.m. – 1:49 p.m.

JMU Student Success Center

738 S. Mason St. Harrisonburg, VA 22807

**In Attendance:** Cecilia Williams, Michael Martinez, Gloria Maria Pena Rockhold, Carmen Romero, Karina Kline-Gabel, Paul Berry, Cecilia Barbosa, Juan Espinoza, Melody Gonzales, Eugene Chigna, Vivian Sanchez-Jones, Jorge Yinat, Edgar Aranda, Edgar Lara, Alex Guzman, Damien Cabezas

**Not in Attendance:** Victoria Cartagena, Aida Pacheco, Ana Solorio, Sergio Rimola

**Staff & Counsel:** Justin Bell (Assistant Attorney General), Maribel Castaneda (Staff Liaison), Fernando Mercado-Violand (Director of Latino Outreach)

**Call to Order:** Cecilia Barbosa called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. Quorum met.

### Welcome and Introductions

Chair Barbosa welcomed everyone to the meeting, followed by a welcome on behalf of the Office of the Provost from James Madison University Diversity Chief Dr. David Owasu.

Chair Barbosa introduced Alex Guzman, a new VLAB member.

### Public Comment

Michael Monrroy from Americans For Prosperity/Libre Initiative was present for the meeting from Loudoun County. He works with the Hispanic community and was present to listen and network.

### Liaison's Administration Report – Maribel Castaneda

Maribel Castaneda briefed the board on the following topics.

- Ms. Castaneda acknowledged the board's work on the annual report and indicated that there was positive feedback from the Secretary of the Commonwealth and Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth about the current version of the report. Ms. Castaneda is arranging for a meeting in May with Governor Northam to present the final version of the report, and she is waiting for the Asian Advisory Board to submit their recommendations in order to fix a date for both VLAB and VAAB in the Governor's schedule. The annual report will be posted on VLAB's website after it is presented to the Governor.
- Ms. Castaneda welcomed any strategies on how to connect the recommendations in the report to action and expressed a hope that the report will reach out to important stakeholders.

### End of Liaison's Update

### **Consideration of Previous Minutes (02/22/2019) – at 9:24 a.m.**

Chair Barbosa asks if there are any changes to the minutes from the previous board meeting. Several members made requests for changes to the proposed minutes. There was discussion and Chair Barbosa asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Michael Martinez made a motion to approve, and is seconded by Edgar Aranda. The motion passed unanimously, with one abstention by Eugene Chigna.

### **Director of Latino Outreach Report – Fernando Mercado-Violand at 9:32 a.m.**

Mr. Mercado-Violand's focus since the last board meeting was keeping immigration organizations and those serving the Latino community apprised of what was happening in the General Assembly during the legislative session. He provided details to these groups and civic groups such as the VLLC and informed them about what the Governor's office was doing in regard to different pieces of proposed legislation.

In March Mr. Mercado-Violand participated in the Latino Boards and Commissions call. He informed the (VLAB) board that many of the people on this call from the Latino community throughout the state are currently serving in some capacity on a board or commission and he has begun exploring new ways to expand the list of current Latino leaders and community activists. His goal is to have monthly stakeholder calls with the next one in May, focusing on Medicaid expansion. He hopes to have Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services Marvin Figueroa on the call.

Mr. Mercado-Violand recently attended a conference in Washington, D.C. focused on immigration policy that covered topics such as immigration status, "New American" communities, and the state of affairs of Latino communities across the US. He is continuing to gather information on how to provide administrative contact and grow communication with New American communities through a permanent office or point of service.

Next Mr. Mercado-Violand described his work with the Virginia Complete Count Commission (VACCC), noting that April 1<sup>st</sup> was Census Awareness Day. He organized and participated in roundtables in Alexandria, Richmond, and Norfolk to engage stakeholders on the Census Issue and galvanize localities to form their own Complete Count Commissions. He will be continuing his outreach efforts to different Latino community groups on the Census in addition to his scheduled office hours.

### **Liaison's Legislative Report – Maribel Castaneda at 9:43 a.m.**

Maribel Castaneda briefed the board on the following topics.

After the conclusion of the legislative session Governor Northam wrote an op-ed on April 11<sup>th</sup> addressing many persistent concerning issues that need solutions and highlighting accomplishments from the legislative session, such as:

- Education:
  - The General Assembly passed the largest single teacher pay increase in 15 years;
  - It also approved a measure to ban tobacco from public schools;
  - Approved a \$12 million investment in public school counselors
  - And signed into law guidelines for improving detection of concussions in student athletes.

- Justice & Courts
  - Removal of the rule stipulating that unpaid court fees would result in driver's license suspension, returning driving privilege's to 627,000 Virginians
- Infrastructure:
  - Approving a dedicated funding stream to I-81 improvements
- Urban Development:
  - Signing into law legislation that will address eviction rates and increase opportunities for low-income Virginians
  - Increasing funding to the Virginia Affordable Housing Trust Fund to \$7 million
- Civic Engagement:
  - Announcing Census Awareness Day, although funding didn't pass through the General Assembly
  - Establishment of the African American Advisory Board, whose official start date is July 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - Ms. Castaneda noted that she is accepting recommendations for members
  - Vetoing a bill that would have restricted voting access
- Health and Human Services
  - Increasing funding for care and support at Central State Hospital located in Petersburg
  - Vetoing a bill that would have undermined access to affordable healthcare and legislation designed to shame TANF recipients
  - Vetoing a bill that would have applied unnecessary restrictions on local law enforcement of non-existent "sanctuary cities" in the Commonwealth

Mr. Martinez added that the Governor passed a bill requiring leases to be written.

Mr. Aranda commented that working together with Ms. Castaneda and Mr. Mercado-Violand and the rest of the legislative team was a pleasure and critical in the effort to support good legislation

### **VLAB communication and outreach policy at 9:53 a.m.**

Vice Chair Kline-Gabel raised this issue to address ongoing thoughts on how VLAB can begin engaging with the Latino community across the Commonwealth. She commented that it is important to have a consistent policy on outreach and communication, and consider how we use our representation positively online when we represent VLAB in our respective communities. The Executive team is designing outreach strategies with Mr. Bell and Karina is leading this project internally. The idea of all of this is to facilitate our ability to go out into the community and form stronger connections. Examining the best practices and asking where to partner is key, and she is working quickly so that the plan can be evaluated in time for the next board meeting and put into practice. She encouraged the subcommittees to take up this issue as well in their individual domains.

Ms. Gonzales added it would be helpful to think about what is the community engagement group plan and if there are other opportunities we can start thinking about. She asked what were some specific engagement opportunities and wants to bring these to Justin to evaluate if they are within the mission of the board.

Mr. Yinat expressed the importance of getting the outreach plan in writing and establishing procedures that will be good for planning on specific issues.

Carmen Romero complimented the healthcare forum as a successful example of community outreach and suggested addressing one topic by quarter in partnership with the many non-profits that tackle these issues. She brought up the “Radical Hospitality Model” as a vehicle for increased community engagement. Engagement involves a high level of work, so given limited resources she suggested VLAB could make gains on different topics it prioritizes by partnering with community groups.

### **Summary of the VLLC meeting with Governor Northam on Monday May 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:07 a.m.**

Chair Barbosa described that the VLLC is a 501 c4 designed to increase the points of contact between the Latino community and the administration. The head of the organization, Mr. Walter Tejada organized and led the meeting. Mr. Tejada created the list of topics to address with the Governor based on suggestions from meeting participants, of which some VLAB members were included (members in parentheses denotes involvement in the discussion on that issue):

- Driver privilege cards (Mr. Edgar Aranda)
- Wage theft reduction measures (Mr. Paul Berry)
- Census 2020 funding for Latino communities (Mr. Paul Berry)
- Recruitment of Latinos into the Governor’s administration (Mr. Paul Berry)
- Affordable housing and eviction policies (Chair Barbosa)
- Procurement (Mr. Yinat *in absentia*)
- Consumer financial protection (Mr. Yinat *in absentia*)
- In-state tuition for Dreamers
- Expansion of the Office of Immigrant Services
- Racism and white privilege
- Working and living conditions of migrant farm workers

Chair Barbosa detailed that the Governor expressed interest in all the topics and was receptive to solutions proposed by the speakers on them.

Mr. Aranda commented that on the driver’s privilege card issue the subject matter advocates are currently requesting meetings with representatives from the Virginia State Police and Secretary Moran.

### **Committee Strategic Planning at 10:20 a.m.**

Chair Barbosa next presented the flowchart (see end of minutes) for use in the subcommittee meetings to facilitate planning on different subjects. The idea is that the subcommittees can meet to discuss what action can be taken within the subcommittee and then what actions can be taken by the entire board and Executive Committee to provide support.

Mr. Martinez observed that there was a commission established in 2018 on affordable housing issues and evictions and asked if there is a way to connect with that commission and take joint action on issues before it and VLAB.

Chair Barbosa instructed the subcommittees to convene at 10:27 a.m. and to halt their work at 11:30 to resume Board business.

The Chair reconvened the Board at 12:05

## **Subcommittee Presentations**

### Housing

Mr. Martinez began by observing that a consistent funding stream for affordable housing is an identified priority. The current \$7,000,000 per year will have an impact but this could be grown and reach a wider population. Applying lessons from similar programs for identifying those in need and devising solutions can be strengthened if the affordable housing issue is taken up in partnership with the AAAB and the AFAMAB. There are many downstream effects from more affordable housing solutions (higher education rates, better health outcomes, etc.) and coordination with the other boards on this issue could be productive. Tenant education is another area that could be improved with the administration distributing bilingual/multilingual information to help VA residents who are not aware of rights and resources. For the executive committee it would be a goal to promote the statewide pro bono housing law program and the multilingual tenants rights documentation.

Ms. Romero suggested meeting with the Board of Housing and possibly attending their next meeting. The affordable housing issue recommendations will be different now that Amazon is coming to Virginia as well. A few meetings back a presentation was given on the Latino population in different housing situations and this data would help communicate and access the housing issue.

### Business

Mr. Yinat began by observing that wage theft reduction was presented in the annual report to the Governor. Next, Mr. Aranda described the next step on this issue as identifying a person within the administration or possibly legislators who are interested in this topic and begin meeting with different stakeholders in order to continue directly advocating on policy solutions for wage theft.

Mr. Bell added that it is possible to facilitate communications between board members and individuals working in the administration concerned with this and other areas of VLAB interest

Mr. Aranda continued on the topic of road safety and driver's privilege cards, stressing that it is an advocacy issues that he would like to continue to raise with relevant stakeholders. He and others are seeking to communicate this importance to Secretary Moran and the Virginia State Police as relevant parties who can advise on how to make progress on this issue. Mr. Bell advised that meeting with Secretary Moran is possible.

Mr. Yinat added an additional point to clarify that the driver's privilege card should be offered to those that are termed "undocumented residents" to more accurately assess the status of individuals who would benefit from this service.

Mr. Guzman pointed out that having a driver's privilege card would help mitigate the housing and eviction instability in the Commonwealth on the basis that renters can present cards as a valid piece of identification for entry into leases.

Mr. Yinat addressed state contract and procurement by small Latino-owned businesses. Last year we attended a meeting with the director of Small Business Supply and Diversity and she was very receptive to the idea that more data sharing is required to analyze the type of participation in the procurement process and small businesses owned by Latinos. As a result of that she was willing to assist in gathering these metrics and making them available when possible. The recommendation from the subcommittee to the governor is to facilitate a restructure within the SBSB to allow for that kind of data collection and dissemination. Working with the Dept of General Services on this could also be productive.

### Health

Cecilia Williams described Medicaid access and the importance of eliminating the work requirement which currently stands at 40 quarters of work history and 10 years of residency. Reducing these requirements would enable more residents to access quality affordable healthcare and she is working with Assistant Secretary Figueroa and Jill Hanken to introduce a legislative solution. This would have a positive impact on the number of eligible residents and improve the quality of healthcare coverage.

Damien Cabezas described aspects of the current gap program and the coverage imbalance, highlighting the need for greater access to linguistic services in health care. There are examples of good programs in other states that provide things like telemedicine and visiting Spanish speaking physicians.

Chair Barbosa added that facilitating more interpreters in all the medical professional fields to increase healthcare access and service is a recommendation to raise on this issue with the governor's office.

### Civic Engagement

Vice Chair Kline-Gabel brought up the VACCC and recommended asking the VACCC for a brief at the next VLAB meeting.

Mrs. Sanchez-Jones asked how many Latinos are on the CCC. Mr. Mercado-Violand answered that he and Ms. Castaneda are assigned to the VACCC and will inquire on this question and share the answer with the VLAB.

Mr. Aranda commented that he is on the Fairfax County CCC and will provide feedback from that as well.

Mrs. Pena Rockhold asked that if there are best practices to share from Mr. Aranda's work that he inform the VACCC and VLAB.

Vice Chair Kline-Gable continued by discussing how to restructure the VLAB website to better communicate what the board does, what important civic participation opportunities are available

to the public, and offer overall better centralization of productive actions VA residents can take. There isn't necessarily a social media component for this right now, but this could take place later on as well to compliment the website updates and disseminate information in both places. She stressed the importance of communicating in multiple languages and how this fits into a strategic social media plan.

Ms. Gonzales next addressed English Language Learning (ELL) by posing the question of how the Secretary of Education can collaborate with educators, students, and families to create a systematic approach to ELL. Identifying those that could benefit from the ELL resources is a starting place. Reaching out to Latinos in other civic, board, and commission spaces for this as well could be productive. Evaluating the quantitative and qualitative data on ELL educators is also a useful activity. For the board it would be helpful to share what is happening in each board members' respective community on the ELL topic when there is something to share.

Counselors expansion in public schools is another area of concern – increasing the number of Spanish speaking counselors and Latino counselors would be a way to improve local results. This should fit with the other goal of hiring more Latino educators and teachers in schools.

Chair Barbosa concluded this portion of the meeting by noting that the next steps are to meet with the Governor and provide this feedback and discuss the report recommendations. Following that meeting the Executive Committee will report back to the entire Board and then begin implementing the actions for each recommendation, including monitoring status and maintaining accountability over the direction of the policy recommendations.

#### **Discussion on Census Complete Count Website and Public Resources at 12:55 p.m.**

Mr. Mercado-Violand used his laptop to project the VACCC website in order to describe information and resources available to the public on the 2020 Census. The VACCC has members from around the Commonwealth who are leaders from different constituency groups as well as 2 elected officials. It meets monthly and there is a phased work plan consisting of an education phase, followed by an awareness phase, and finally a get out the census/implementation phase. The CCC is working on messaging to share this plan statewide and with local CCCs. He encouraged us to share with the Latino community and informed the Board that there are Census staff in the state that can act as points of contact for the implementation of the Census. The Census staff in Virginia are currently expanding with new hires right now, including for the role of a bilingual resource officer. This is a resource for informing the public about the Census, what it is meant to accomplish, and how to participate in its effective and safe completion.

Mr. Yinat asked if the website is going to appear in multiple languages. Mr. Mercado-Violand replied affirmatively.

Chair Barbosa next asked how residents were defined. Mr. Mercado-Violand responded that any current inhabitant of the Commonwealth is eligible for counting by the Census.

#### **Bylaws discussion at 1:05 p.m.**

Mr. Martinez began the discussion by noting that the Ad Hoc Governance Committee met and formulated suggestions for changes as well as considered recommendations from VLAB members submitted electronically and at the previous meeting. The Governance Committee evaluated changes it found necessary to include or remove based on the distinction between

bylaws and policies. If a clause appeared in the governing document that created VLAB legislatively then it would be considered unnecessary to duplicate in the Bylaws of VLAB. Policies would be created for actions deemed necessary for the functioning of the Board that were not found in the Bylaws.

Mr. Bell added that there should be a clause in the Bylaws that would allow for the creation of different policies.

Mr. Martinez continued by stressing the importance of adhering to established deadlines for input when documents are available for review by the entire Board.

Chair Barbosa indicated that the meeting was drawing to a close and that the Bylaws discussion should be tabled to ensure all concerns were addressed. She also clarified that members of the Executive Committee was made at the previous meeting and consisted of the elected members and the subcommittee chairs. Mr. Bell added that the vote Chair Barbosa referenced establishes who is in the Executive Committee but it is advisable to put this in writing as well.

Mr. Yinat agreed with this and with Mr. Martinez's suggestion to adhere to a deadline for submitting additional comments.

Chair Barbosa asks for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Chigna made the motion, and was seconded by Mrs. Pena Rockhold. The motion passed by unanimous vote at 1:49.

The next meeting is set for June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in Hampton Roads.

<b>LEGISLATIVE ACTION</b>	<b>EXEC COMMITTEE</b>	<b>FULL BOARD</b>
Increase affordable housing – dedicated funding source for housing. Add Amazon.	Coordinate with VAAB and AA Board. Infographic from our demographic of our priorities and needs.	Help contact with your organizations – e.g. health.
Reduce evictions	As above	As above
Reduce incidence of wage theft – follow up w DOLI.	None	None
Increase road safety - driving privileges – meet w Secy Moran;	None	None



Del Cox, transportation comm.		
Medicaid access - eliminate 40 quarter work requirement – Jill Hanken, Marvin Figueroa	None	None
Latinx participation in Census 2020	Briefing of Board at next meeting. Give information between meetings.	Awareness – start outreach.
Increase access & diversity of state government		

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION</b>	<b>EXEC COMM.</b>	<b>FULL BOARD</b>
Create open and accessible government		
Strengthen state contract and procurement		
Increase civic engagement - voter registration – enhance website so public can see what VLAB is doing. Connect other sites to VLAB.	Website – give feedback on enhancing VLAB website.	Review and approve enhanced website

Systematic approach to ELL – data on ELL educators, what are issues. How to support DOE w parent engagement.	Help with DOE meetings secured. Advocate for new \$ be dedicated to Latinx counselors.	Hearing stories – let Comm know. Let Comm know of inspiring work done w parent engagement. Best practices? Staff who are ELL w good stories.
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